

## Update on the Mercury Collaborative

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Board) is currently developing a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) value for mercury in the Delta; such TMDLs have already been approved for Cache Creek, San Francisco Bay, and other California waterways. The Board's process underway consists of two parts: Delta methylmercury TMDL development and a Basin Plan Amendment. Regarding the first step, a report titled "Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary TMDL for Methyl and Total Mercury Draft Report" was released in 2005; revisions are being posted to the Board's web page. The second step will culminate in a Basin Plan Amendment staff report which will propose a site-specific water quality objective for the Delta, an implementation plan to achieve the objective, and regulations to reduce mercury and methylmercury discharges; a draft of this report is expected to be released in June 2006. More information on the process is available at [www.waterboards.ca.gov](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov).

The Delta Protection Commission convened a collaborative group to provide coordinated input into the Board's Delta mercury TMDL process in late 2005. To date, the Collaborative has expressed a desire for integration of the Commission's Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta (Plan), several "Delta visioning" processes and programs being undertaken by other entities, multi-species HCP/NCCPs, and other prominent Delta activities, into the Board's TMDL process. The most recent letter submitted to the Board on behalf of the Collaborative, dated March 30, 2006, iterated the need to integrate these other processes (see attached).

Currently, the Collaborative is in the process of soliciting technical assistance from two consultants – a mercury / methylmercury scientist and an environmental economist – to help the Collaborative shape its input into the Regional Board's process once the Basin Plan Amendment staff report is released. The two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were circulated in mid-April and early May, respectively, with bids on the first RFP (mercury / methylmercury scientist) due May 5 and bids on the second RFP (environmental economist) due May 15. These RFPs are being funded with the following contributions from Collaborative entities:

- Yolo County Planning and Public Works: \$10,000
- Sacramento County Regional Sanitation District: \$10,000
- CA Dept. of Fish and Game: \$5,000